

A

# REVIEW

OF THE

## Affairs of FRANCE:

Purg'd from the Errors and Partiality of *News Writers*  
and *Petty-Statefmen*, of all Sides.

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Saturday, May 27. 1704.

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**S**ince so long, yet I hope not unprofitable Digression, relating to the *French Grandeur*, some of which every days News informs us, is too true; 'Tis time to let the Reader know, we do not forget the Connexion of the Story, and that it remains to consider the *Grandeur* of this Monarch, by Sea.

Something of this Nature has already been touch'd at, when I was Enquiring by what Methods the King of *France* furnish'd himself with Seamen; but to proceed regularly in this Case, it may not be amiss to Examine when, and how he has improved his Naval Power.

We find in the Reign of *Lewis XIII.* Cardinal *Richlieu* saw the great Deficiency of the *French* in this Matter; for the *Rochellers*, strong in Shipping, and supplied from *England* with Stores, grew so very formidable, that they spread the Seas with a Fleet of 35 Sail of Men of War, which made Prize of all the Roman Catholick Ships, ruin'd the Trade, and Enrich'd themselves to admiration: For as the King had no Fleet able to Encounter them, they Employ'd themselves not only in Defence of themselves, but rov'd over the narrow Seas as Privateers, and by this Means kept themselves in a Posture able to Match the King,

and to support their Forces by Land; and an Instance of this is found in the Histories of those Times, in the Year 1625.

Seven of the King's biggest Ships lay at *Blavet*, a Port of *Bretaign*, not far from *Rochel*; *Soubize*, the Admiral of the *Rochellers*, Attack'd 'em, took six of 'em, and carried them into *Rochel*, in spight of all the Fire from the great Batteries on the Shoar.

This Advantage was so considerable, that the Author of the Life of Cardinal *Richlieu* says, this occasion'd the Peace with the *Rochellers*, which immediately follow'd. During this Peace, the *French* joyn'd with the Duke of *Savoy*, made that most Ridiculous and Fruitless Expedition against the City of *Genoa*, where they came back with loss and dishonour enough, especially considering the weakness of the *Genoese*, who had not 6000 Men in their whole State, but in short the Duke Trifled away his Time at the Siege of *Gavi*, till the *Spaniards* brought Relief into *Genoa*, with a Fleet of 40 Gallies, and till the *Spanish* Army, under the Duke of *Feria* came down from *Millan*, fell upon their Rear, and chased them with shame out of all they had gotten from the *Genoese*.

The Reason of telling this short Story of an Expedition by Land, when I am Treat-

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ing of the Naval Affairs, is this; The King of France had not then Power enough at Sea to Attack *Genoa*, as they have since Effectually done, with but a small Squadron; but to do this, hired 20 Men of War of the *Dutch*, and 6 of the *English*.

'Tis true, Cardinal *Richlieu* put a Trick upon the *Dutch* and *English* too, and instead of Employing them against the *Genoese*, Employed them against the *Rockellers*, and so brought the Protestant Fleets to Ruin their Brethren. But *Soubize* met with the *Dutch*, for he came bravely out of Port and fought them all, burnt 6 of the King of France's Fleet, sunk 3 of the *Hollanders*, and burnt their Vice-Admiral, and three more of the French Men of War in the next Fight were thus destroy'd, being all grappled close on board a *Rockeller*, the obstinate Captain finding, as the *Historian* tells, he could never die more to his Enemies Damage, refused Quarter, and setting fire to his Powder, blew himself up, and those 3 Vessels with him.

'Tis true, a few days after this, the French Fleet join'd with the *English* and *Dutch*, beat the *Rockellers*, and took 9 of their Vessels, after a most obstinate Fight, much to the Honour of the three Nations; it was *Two Troopers and a Dragoon beat a little-Boy*: Three Confederate Fleets, of three Potent Nations, against one oppress'd City; and much for the Honour of the *English* and *Dutch* Protestants, who thus suppress'd that Power which would have upheld the Protestant Interest in France, and which all the Naval Force of the French was not able to engage with.

I know no better Period to fix the Weakness of the French Naval Power at, than here, since this is not yet 80 Years ago, and all the World cannot shew an Increase of such a Magnitude in so short a time.

From this Success of the French against themselves, for the Protestants of *Rockel* were still a part of themselves, the next Instance of their Naval Strength, was at the Siege of *Rockel*.

Here, for want of Ships, they could never make any thing of the Siege, and had the *English* been as hearty in Relieving it, as the Inhabitants were in Defending, the Cardinal had laid his Bones under the Walls

of it, and it might have been a Siege to this day.

The Cardinal was so sensible of this, that it seems the Fate of the *Rockellers* rather Commanded his stay against Reason, against Hope, against Probability, than that he had any Prospect of Success, as will appear when we come to the particular Story.

But 'tis apparent, the Apprehensions he had were great, in that wonderful Care he took to prevent the *Rockellers* obtaining any Assistance by Sea. The first thing the Cardinal did, was to make a Treaty with Spain, for 40 Sail of Ships to join their own Fleet, which never could make above 30, and those very sorry things be sure, as might appear by this Article, that when ever an *English* Meet came before the Place, the French Men of War hal'd under the Shoar, and in the Creeks, where the *English* Ships durst not come for want of Water.

We all know the *English* Ships in those days, were not like what they are now, and very few of them carried above 50 Guns, many from 26 to 40; and if these were such Great Ships that they could not Fleet in to hurt the French, their Proportion may be guess'd at, *Ex Pede Herculem*.

Any Man that knows the Present State of France and Spain, but has read nothing of the Histories of those Times, would Laugh at those reading this, and talk of bringing the Author before his own Club, to tell the World of the Spaniards lending the French a Fleet of 40 Men of War.

But let them Laugh at their Pleasure; thus it was, and without this Assistance, all the Mighty Fence which the Cardinal built cross the *Bassins* of the Harbour at *Rockel*, would never have prevented the Relief of the Place; nor as it was, had the *English* and *Dutch* join'd in Resolutions of Attempting the Relief of the Place.

But the Cardinal had debauch'd the *Dutch* into a Resolution of being Passive in this Case; and as once they lent their Fleet to Disable the *Rockellers*, so now they agreed to stand Neuter, and neither attempt their Relief, nor join any of their Ships with the *English*.

As to the *English*, the Embarrassments King Charles I. met with at Home, the ill Conduct of the Duke of *Buckingham*, and worse

of the Lord *Montague*, soon gave the Cardinal Light to see he had nothing to fear on that side; and that, could he but get the *Spanish Fleet* to *Rockel*, the *English* would look on, and see the Town Taken; and so it happen'd.

For at last, tho' after 14 Months Treachery, the *Spaniards* came under *Don Fredrick de Toledo*; our Fleets came and shewed themselves, and as they have done too often since, went and saw, and came home again.

These are some of the best Descriptions I can give out of Modern Stories, of the Naval Power of *France*, which was so weak, but in the Year 1628, that had the *English* and *Dutch* stood Neuter at first, or the *Spaniards* at last; the *Rockellers* alone had beaten all the Royal Fleet, and in all Probability been Lords at Sea to this hour.

The Sence the Cardinal had of this Defect, made him resolve upon Measures to prevent the like for the Future; and as *Rockel* being now subdued, became a Member of *France*, he gave the *Rockellers* all the Encouragement in Sea Affairs as possible, tho' at Land he took care to lay them low enough.

It was not two Summers after the taking of *Rockel*, but the *Feenick* appeared with 40 Men of War in the Ocean, of which we are told 25 of them were Commanded by the *Rockellers*, and as the War with *Spain* ensued immediately after the suppression of the *Hugonot* War, the *Spanish* Ad-

miral had the Pleasure to see his Advice wanted, as well as the Mortification to see himself block'd up with his Fleet in the *Groyne*, by those very *French* he had help'd to make so great.

It should have been Noted, That when *Frederick de Toledo*, the *Spanish* Admiral, receiv'd Orders to put to Sea, and Assist the *French* in the Siege of *Rockelle*, he Represented to the *Conde d' Olivarez*; the *Spanish* Minister, that 'twas his Opinion, they ought rather to assist the *Rockellers*, for that if the King took the City, he would be too much at Leisure, both by Sea and Land for the *Spaniards* to suppose it would be safe for them; but *Olivarez* could not bear to hear of Assisting Hereticks.

I must allow here, that if *Frederick de Toledo* was the better Politician, the *Conde de Olivarez* was the better Catholic.

But if the last was for securing the Catholic Religion, the first was truest to the Interest of his native Country, and consequently the best *Spaniard*.

But at the same time, what shall we say of the Difference between the Care the *Spaniards* took of their Religion, that they would rather run the Risk of all the ill Consequences which might follow, than assist the *Heretick Hugonots*; and the *English* and *Dutch*, two Protestant Nations should not only stand still at last, and see their Brethren and the Protestant Religion entirely suppress'd, but send their Fleets and Men to help on their Destruction?

## A DVICE from the Scandalous CLUB.

OUR Society affords but little Diversion this Week, not because they have nothing to furnish the World with, but so much to say they know not which to begin with first.

Some People of petulant Fame, have blam'd the Club for exposing Crimes which they call *little ones*, such as Whoring, Drunkenness, killing Folks, Duelling, and the like, which they call making Sport with our Neighbours Misfortunes.

And now the Society has a List of such Crimes before them, as they are in Doubt

as to exposing them, for Fear of scandalizing the whole Nation.

They are not willing to bring in Three Men of the Band, setting up a Club in Opposition to ours, and practising there a Crime too big for us to censure, too vile for us to name—— Our early positive Resolution, not to espouse *Party-Quarrels*, makes us also resolve not to tell the World, whether these Gentlemen of the Band belong to the separate Societies of the *Band and Cloak*, the *Band and Cassock*, or the *Band and long Robe*; but 'tis enough as to Scan-

dal, that, 5 Gentlemen more, whereof 2 of Quality and 3 in Commission of Peace; have most eminently sullied their own Characters, by endeavouring to deliver the rest from the Hand of Justice, and thereby made Work enough for the Reproaches of those who think them as Guilty as the rest.

The Society receiv'd an Ingenious Letter lately from a Person who is offended at some of our News-writers, giving *English* Titles of Honour to Foreigners, as my Lord Overkirk, &c. Had not that Gentleman put a little too-much Salt into his Letter, it should have been publish'd; and if he pleases to put it into a Stile, &c. as he very well knows how, he shall have Justice done him——in the mean time we are to tell him, 'tis no new thing for those Gentlemen to give Titles and take away Titles.

As one of them lately told us of the E-lector of *Albemarle*, another of the Earl of *Marlborough*, another of Prince *Jaob* in *Nubius*; and now my Lord *Dutchman*, and my Lord *Walloon*, which is just as proper as my Lord *Post-Boy*; and those Gentlemen are as far from being honour'd by their calling them so, as their Understanding is to be valued that do it.

A certain Gentleman lately was pleas'd to send the Society a 'most lamentable Poetical Complaint against the Surgeons, that admit People to Her Majesty's Touch for the Evil; and this Accusation being in Verse, we had the more Regard to it, but that upon due Enquiry, the Society cannot find Reason to think the Fact true.

Now tho' a great deal of Civility will be shown to all Gentlemen that inform us of Particulars, and in especial Manner to a Poetical Scandal, yet we must desire all such Gentlemen to have a particular Regard to Matter of Fact.

**A**dvertisements are taken in by J. Matthews in Pilkington-Court in Little Britain.

#### ADVERTISEMENT S.

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**T**he Famous Dispensary Poem, continued to this Time; with a large Commentary, fully Explaining the Characters of little *Mirmil*, *Socra Querge*, and all the other Physicians Graduate and not Graduate, who betray the Patients and their Profession to the Empiricks.

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Speedily will be publish'd, **C**assandra: (but I hope not) Telling what will come of it. Part I. In Answer to the Occasional Letter: Numb. 1. Wherein the New Associations, &c. are considered.

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